

Message Text

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15

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /055 W

----- 090489

R 191012Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4383

INFO CINCPAC

DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 9072

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TH, CB

SUBJECT: THAI-KHMER CONFRONTATION ALONG THE BORDER IN TRAT
PROVINCE

REF: DAO BANGKOK IR 6-895-0273-75

1. A POLITICAL SECTION LOCAL EMPLOYEE VISITED CHANTHABURI
AND TRAT PROVINCES OF SOUTHEASTERN THAILAND MAY 14 AND 15.
AN OFFICER FROM SUPREME COMMAND, THEN AT KHLONG YAI DISTRICT
OF TRAT, TOLD HIM THAT THE MILITARY SITUATION IN KHLONG YAI
IS TENSE. THE PARTICULAR FOCUS OF KHMER-THAI CONFLICT IS
HATLEK VILLAGE, APPROXIMATELY 17 KMS SOUTH OF THE DISTRICT
SEAT AT THE SOUTHEASTERNMOST TIP OF THE BORDER. THE KHMER
COMMUNISTS HAVE DEMANDED THE RELOCATION OF A DEMARCATION
POST, NUMBER 73, TO A POINT 100 METERS INSIDE THAI TERRITORY.
THE KHMER COMMUNISTS HAD SET A DEADLINE OF THE EVENING OF
MAY 18.

2. THE OFFICER SAID THERE ARE ABOUT 500 KHMER
COMMUNIST TROOPS JUST ACROSS THE BORDER. THAI MARINES
AND BORDER POLICE PATROL PERSONNEL HAVE BRACED THEM-
SELVES FOR ACTION TO PREVENT REMOVAL OF THE DEMARCATION
POST. THE OFFICER CONTENTED THAT IF FIGHTING TOOK PLACE,
THAI FORCES MIGHT PUSH INTO CAMBODIAN TERRITORY, POSSIBLY
AS FAR AS KOH YO. HE ALSO SAID THAI NAVY GUNBOATS
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ARE PREPARED TO PROVIDE BACKUP FIREPOWER.

3. THE TERRAIN IS TO THE KHMER ADVANTAGE. THE THAI HAVE A LONG NARROW STRIP OF LAND ON THEIR SIDE, AND THE KHMER POSSESS HIGHER GROUND OF INFINITELY GREATER DEPTH.

4. PLEASE SEE THE REFERENCED IR FOR A FULLER DESCRITPION OF THE SITUATION AT KHLONG YAI.
WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BOUNDARY CLAIMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BANGKO09072
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750175-0382
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750537/aaaabhcd.tel
Line Count: 70
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 DAO BANGKOK IR 6-895-0273-75
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 JUL 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <24 JUL 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THAI-KHMER CONFRONTATION ALONG THE BORDER IN TRAT PROVINCE
TAGS: PBOR, TH, CB
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006